

WILD RESOURCES AREAS ALTERNATIVES I - V

Introduction and Definitions

These alternatives present a range of options for Wild Resources Areas on the NHAL. The purpose of a Wild Resources Area, as defined in Administrative Code NR 44.06, is to provide areas for remote, non-motorized recreation where natural ecological processes predominate and evidence of human impact is low. These areas have little or no visible resource management activity and only primitive recreational facilities. Vegetative management would be restricted to occasional activities such as thinning of a pine plantation to create more natural-appearing forest conditions, or possibly control of exotic species. Generally, salvage of fallen trees after a disturbance would not occur.

Wild Resources Areas may have Recreation Settings of either Type 1 or Type 2 (NR 44.07). Type 1 areas are remote, and offer recreational users the experience of solitude, challenge, independence, and self-reliance. These areas include at least 2000 acres that are ½ mile from any federal, state, or county highway, and ¼ mi from any other public road, motorized trail, or frequently used railroad track. The Type 2 setting, which allows for more developed recreation than the Type 1 setting, provides a remote or *somewhat remote* area for solitude and primitive, non-motorized recreation. Type 2 areas may have some roads or motorized trails, but only at a low density. Type 2 areas may be smaller than Type 1 areas. They can also provide a buffer around a Type 1 area, enhancing the wild resource value of that core area.

The previous NHAL Master Plan from 1982 identified one 5,460 acre “wilderness area”, and three “wild areas” totaling 26,920 acres. The 1982 “wilderness area” has essentially the same management as a Type 1 Wild Resources Area. The 1982 “wild area” designation, however, is different from Wild Resources Areas. The previous “wild areas” allowed for some timber harvesting, habitat management including wildlife openings, and snowmobile trails, which would be typically prohibited in all Wild Resources Areas (Type 1 or Type 2) designated in the next master plan.

Process

In developing the Wild Resources Alternatives Maps I-V, WDNR staff first isolated blocks of land greater than 2000 acres that were the appropriate distance from public highways and town road routes. Some of these were eliminated due to significant conflicting uses such as power lines, nearby gravel pits, existing recreational facilities, etc. This process shows there are 17 areas on the NHAL that meet the minimum requirements to be considered for Wild Resources Area designation. A range of alternatives was then developed, from 1 proposed wild resource area in Alternative I to 17 areas in Alternative V. Acreage figures are shown in Table 2. In addition, Alternatives I, II, and III have a majority of Type 2 areas while Alternatives IV and V have a majority of Type 1 areas. (See Maps I-V.) Factors that influenced the alternatives include recreational and vegetative compatibility with the Wild Resources Area designation. Existing Wild and Wilderness Areas were carefully considered for potential designation as Wild Resources Areas.

Table 2. Wild Resources Area Alternatives I-V by acres and percent of state-owned land in the NHAL

	Total Wild Resources Areas (acres)	Type 1 Wild Resources Areas (acres)	Type 2 Wild Resources Areas (acres)	Percent of NHAL state owned land in Wild Resources Areas (Type 1 and 2)
Alternative I	6,182	4,019	2,163	3%
Alternative II	28,115	9,911	18,204	12%
Alternative III	36,424	16,148	20,276	16%
Alternative IV	62,688	37,683	25,005	28%
Alternative V	80,354	47,780	32,574	36%